

NONCOMMERCIAL RIVER PERMIT APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

General Information:

The Alsek River and its major tributary, the Tatshenshini River, are large volume, swift, glacial rivers. Beginning in the interior, it is one of a small number of river systems which breach the coastal range, offering boaters uncommon ecological diversity, impressive scenery and an outstanding wilderness experience.

Planning and executing a river trip on the Alsek-Tatshenshini Rivers is a lengthy, expensive and complex process. Please be ready to commit the time necessary to get to and from the river in addition to running it. Be prepared to pay high fees for drop off services and bush airplane charters. The only way out of Dry Bay is by airplane charter.

Dalton Post (Shawshe): The mostly used put-in is Dalton Post (Shawshe) which is 140 river miles (224 km) to the take-out at Dry Bay, Alaska. A six mile-long canyon immediately below Shawshe offers continuous Class III whitewater, Class IV at high water (International Scale, Class I-VI). The remainder of the river is generally Class II with large eddies and folds at normal volumes. The difficulty of the river surprises many river runners. It is also on land owned by the Champagne & Aishihik First Nations in Canada. This is part of their traditional lands and portions of the area are sacred. When you arrive at Dalton Post (Shawshe), please read the informational bulletin boards and obey the posted signs and regulations. The maps and information will direct you to the put-in. Please respect the land and requests of the Champagne-Aishihik people.

If you are not prepared for and willing to commit to this magnitude of wilderness trip, please do not get on the waiting list, get a permit, and then cancel. This only reduces other river runners' opportunities to float the rivers.

You must comply with all U.S. and Canadian Customs, conservation and other laws. Contacts: U.S. Customs Service, P.O. Box 1509, Haines, AK, 99827, (907) 767-5511; Canada Customs, Box 4520, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 2R8, (867) 667-3964.

Glacier Bay National Park/Preserve, Kluane National Park & Reserve, British Columbia Parks, Yukon Territorial Government and Champagne & Aishihik First Nations continue to work on a joint international river management plan. Until the time an international plan is in place, Glacier Bay National Park/Preserve will manage the private permit system. **Note:** All fees collected are used to offset administrative, maintenance, patrol and personnel costs in managing the river and river permit system.

I. Permits:

Travel on the Alsek and Tatshenshini Rivers through Glacier Bay National Park requires a USNPS permit

Trips entering the United States must have been legally registered as required by Canadian authorities. Please be aware that you are traveling through two other parks on the river: Kluane National Park on the Alsek River and Tatshenshini-Alsek Park in British Columbia on the Tatshenshini River and lower Alsek River.

Customs: Trips must comply with all U.S. Customs and Canadian Customs requirements. You can contact U.S. Customs at (907) 767-5511 and Canadian Customs at (867) 667-3964. Detailed customs information will be sent with the permit.

Please note: British Columbia Parks is now instituting a fee of up to \$100.00 or \$125.00 (Canadian) per person, depending on the date of the trip for all Alsek and Tatshenshini trips.

Kluane National Park: For travel on the upper Alsek, through Kluane, private boaters **must** contact Kluane and register to obtain a put-in date. For this information and to receive river management guidelines, contact Kluane National Park, Haines Junction, Yukon, Canada, YOB 1L0, (867) 634-7207, Fax: (867) 634-7208. Kluane has a variety of park-specific bear protection guidelines such as designated camping, which all river users must follow. Firearms of any type are not permitted in Kluane National Park. Human waste carryout is mandatory. Boaters who applied for and received one of the reserved Alsek put-in dates must contact Kluane NP for their backcountry permit.

II. Permit Application Procedures:

A. An individual may write or call the Yakutat Ranger Station at any time to be placed on the waiting list for a permit. There is a \$25 (U.S.) administrative charge to be placed on the waiting list. Payments are accepted by money order or credit card. If paying by credit card, include in your letter the name as it appears on the card, the card type, the card number, the expiration date, and that you would like to have \$25 charged to that card. Allocation of permits is completed each fall for the following season. In November, the entire waiting list will be contacted concerning date requests for the following season. In December, dates will be assigned.

The first 40 people on the waiting list may take a date for the next season or defer until the following year. If a permit date is not taken the following year, the person is removed from the waiting list. Only one deferral is allowed after your waiting list number is below 40.

All individuals will be contacted in December concerning either their permit date or their new waiting list number.

When the permit applications are returned in mid-January, anyone on the waiting list is eligible for any untaken dates or any canceled permits and may call for this information at (907) 784-3370. This is a 24-hour recording and message line.

B. Once you receive notification that you will receive a permit, your name is taken off the waiting list.

C. All permit holders must then pay their \$100 (U.S.) permit fee and return their application by January 19th. If the fee and application are not received, and the Yakutat Ranger Station is not contacted, the permit will be canceled and the individual must reapply to the waiting list.

D. Once you have taken a trip as a permittee, you must wait until January 1 the following year to apply again to the waiting list.

E. An individual may participate in one noncommercial river trip per season. This is to allow more people to participate in trips.

F. Cancellation Policy: If you cancel your permit by January 19, you may be placed back at the end of the waiting list and you will receive a refund of your permit fee.

If you cancel your trip by April 1, you will be penalized by forfeiting your permit fee, but you may move to the end of the waiting list without paying the administrative charge.

If you cancel your trip after April 1, you will be penalized by not being allowed to reapply to the waiting list for two years and you forfeit your permit fee.

If you are a "no show" for your river trip, you will not be allowed to reapply for a trip for five years and you forfeit your permit fee.

III. Scheduling:

Scheduling is done to provide an equal number of private and commercial permits throughout the peak season, June 10-Sept. 17. Outside of the peak season, scheduling is for 1 commercial trip on even days and 1 private trip on odd days. Only one trip per day is allowed to arrive at Dry Bay. Since there is no limit on trip length or put-in date (on the Tatshenshini), be aware that there may be other parties putting in at Dalton Post on the same day. If you want to avoid other people, you may want to consider trips early or late in the season. It is also possible to work with other boaters, both commercial and private, to avoid conflicts at the put-in and popular campsites or with shuttles. The application provides a check-off if you would like your application information shared with other river users to coordinate shuttles and air taxis.

Keep in mind that trips arriving at Dry Bay before the third week in June may experience, depending on spring weather conditions, sheet ice/ice blockage on Alsek Lake, requiring a portage of up to ½ mile. In recent years the channel leading to the airstrip has dried up and most groups choose to hire someone to haul their gear from the main channel to the airstrip rather than row/drag up the slack water in the lower end of the channel. Commercial portage services are available at Dry Bay and low or high water can happen at any time.

Depending on weather conditions in the Yukon, flood conditions sometime occur on the upper Tatshenshini below Dalton Post especially in late May-early June and late September-early October.

Dry Bay is not road accessible. Charter flights from Dry Bay can be arranged to Yakutat, which is served by Alaska Airlines, or directly to Whitehorse, Haines, Juneau, etc. From a weather standpoint, the flight to Yakutat is the most reliable option. Flight arrangements must be made prior to departing. A list of permitted air charters is enclosed. A park ranger living in Dry Bay during the summer can be contacted for emergencies. The established take-out, adjacent to the main airstrip, includes a camping area, food storage building, outhouse and a human waste dump station. There is no telephone or trash pick up available. The Dry Bay area supports an active commercial set gill-net fishery. River runners should respect their livelihoods and not disrupt their operations. Stay clear of nets, fish camps and other private property. There are three lodges and a shuttle service operating in Glacier Bay National Preserve. They offer lodging and other services and their addresses and telephone numbers are enclosed.

Note: The arrival date to Dry Bay **must** be adhered to. This is the date you arrive at Dry Bay. There is no restriction on how long you can camp at Dry Bay after your arrival date before your flight out. We recommend scheduling your air taxi pick-up for the day after your Dry Bay arrival. The Dry Bay arrival date spaces river trips to preserve a quality wilderness experience. Arriving at Dry Bay on other than your arrival date will result in a citation and/or court appearance, and denial of future permits/trips on the rivers.

IV. General Requirements:

A. A non-commercial river trip must be participatory in nature. All members of the group must share in the trip preparation (including logistics, food purchases, equipment assembly, transportation, and vehicle shuttle) and the trip itself (including food preparation and sanitation). Collecting a fee (monetary compensation) payable to an individual, group or organization for conducting, leading, or guiding a noncommercial river trip is not allowed.

B. The noncommercial permit is **not** transferable.

C. Non-commercial river trips are limited to a maximum of 15 persons.

D. The trip permittee is responsible for the actions of his or her party.

E. There is no limit on trip length. Camping is restricted to one night at each of the following areas: Walker Glacier, the Alsek Lake Peninsula/Spit, and Gateway Knob; except you may camp an extra night at **one** of these three sites. This restriction is in place to lessen the impact on these popular areas.

V. Watercraft:

A. Rafts. Inflatable rafts from 12'-18' with rowing frames are recommended.

B. Canoes and Kayaks. Rigid hull kayaks are acceptable for the river; however they do present a problem with transport out of Dry Bay. Currently, the only air taxi which can transport most rigid hull kayaks or canoes is the Hawker-Siddley (Air North). Open canoes and folding kayaks are not recommended. A minimum of two boats per party is recommended for safety. Rescue gear and emergency equipment, including a radio, are recommended. On supported and unsupported kayak trips, one spare paddle and one extra life preserver are required for every 4 kayaks and/or canoes. If there are fewer than 4 kayaks or canoes, one spare paddle and one spare life preserver are required.

C. Boat registration. All watercraft operating in Glacier Bay NP/P must be registered according to boat owner's home state's or country's rules of registration.

D. Motorized craft are not permitted under this permit system.

VI. Emergency Equipment:

A. Life Preservers and Regulations. Each participant **must** have a serviceable U.S. and Canadian Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD) Type I, II, III, or V. One extra PFD must be carried for every 10 persons or one per raft. These must be maintained in good and serviceable condition in compliance with U.S. Coast Guard Standards. A throwable cushion (U.S. Coast Guard approved, Type IV) or rope throw bag is required for each watercraft 16 feet in length and over. Rope throw bags are recommended for all watercraft.

B. First Aid. A comprehensive first aid kit is recommended. A smaller kit is also recommended for each separate boat.

C. Communications and signaling. A ground-to-air and/or VHF Marine Band radio transceiver is recommended. (Air to Ground Frequencies are 122.9 for the Alsek River area and 121.5 emergency frequency). Marine Band radios (emergency Channel 16) are practical only in certain areas below the international boundary and from Gateway Knob downstream.

Cellular phones do not work anywhere along the river corridor, but satellite phones work most of the time depending on the surrounding terrain.

Emergency signaling equipment at a minimum should include a signal mirror, flares or smoke bombs and two 3-foot by 10-foot panels of international orange that can be placed in an "X" so as to be visible from aircraft.

D. Other emergency items. One extra set of oars is recommended for each oar-powered boat or raft. Two extra paddles should be carried on rafts that are paddle powered. Each trip with rafts should carry at least one air pump. Each trip must carry a boat patching and repair kit.

E. Incidents. Any incident resulting in personal injury requiring a physician's attention, evacuation from the river or property damage over \$100, and any wildlife encounters/problems must be reported to the NPS as soon as possible at the end of the trip. You may report to the Dry Bay Ranger, the Yakutat Ranger Station or Park headquarters at Bartlett Cove.

F. Firearms. Firearms are not allowed in Kluane National Park and are limited to licensed individuals in Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial Park. Recent changes in Canadian firearms laws have made it difficult to transport any firearms into Canada from the US or elsewhere.

It is allowable to carry the "bear pepper sprays" and "bear bangers" (noise makers). American brands must have a Canadian pesticide permit listed on the can for transport in Canada. Contact Canadian Customs for details. (There are strict limitations on carrying "pepper spray" in aircraft. Check with your air carrier.)

VII. Environmental Protection and Sanitation:

An Environmental Ethics brochure was written by the commercial white-water companies in conjunction with the National Park Service, Parks Canada and the British Columbia Parks Department. Copies sent on request and are included with permits.

The Tatshenshini-Alsek Rivers are managed for their wilderness values. Minimum impact recreation and camping are required to protect the resources. The permit system ensures a limited level of use and impact on these resources. The maximum party size for private groups is 15 persons and there are camping restrictions at certain popular areas. Human waste carryout is required for all boaters. A septic/dump station is available at the rafter take-out at Dry Bay. This is a “hands-on” operation and boaters may wish to carry their wastes out with them. Copies of information on toilet sales and rental sources will be sent with the permit. All trash must be carried out of the area; there is no public dump at Dry Bay. Fire pans are required and all firewood must be dead and down. Black and brown bears inhabit the area and you must know how to camp safely in bear country. It is extremely important that bears not receive any food from visitors. Firearms are not permitted in Klane NP/R or Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial Park.

Glacier Bay National Park regulations:

Pets are not permitted on river trips within Glacier Bay National Park.

Possessing, destroying, injuring, defacing, removing, digging or disturbing from its natural state any plants, rocks, animals, mineral, cultural or archeological resources is prohibited except for the following: Fish taken under State of Alaska sport fishing laws.

The gathering or collecting by hand and for personal use only of the following renewable resources is permitted: natural plant food items, including fruits, berries and mushrooms, but not including threatened or endangered species; driftwood and uninhabited sea shells; and dead and down firewood for use in fires within park areas.

Surface collection, by hand and for personal recreational use only, of rocks and minerals is permitted: provided however, that collection of silver, platinum, gemstones and fossils is prohibited and collection methods which may result in disturbance of the ground surface, such as the use of shovels, pickaxes, and sluice boxes are prohibited.

C. Feeding, touching, teasing, frightening or intentional disturbing of wildlife nesting, breeding or other activities is prohibited.

D. Campfires **must be** in a pan if they are within 1/2 mile of the river.

E. Within ½ mile of the river all solid human waste must be carried out. There is a dump station for boaters at the Dry Bay take out. (This is **not** a complete listing of applicable laws or regulations applying to Glacier Bay National Park/Preserve, Kluane National Park, or Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial Park.)

References and Other Contact Information

Topographic maps are available through the U.S. Geological Survey, 4230 University Dr., Room 101, Anchorage, AK 99508 (907-786-7011) or through a book store in the Yakutat Ranger Station operated by the Alaska Natural History Association at (907) 784-3295. U.S. maps include (1:63,360): Skagway B-8, Yakutat A1, A-2, B-1. Canadian maps are available through private distributors. You can call the Canada Map Office at 800-465-6277 for more information or access a list of dealers using web site, <http://maps.nrcan.gc.ca>. In Whitehorse, Yukon, maps are available through Max Fireweed Books (800-661-0508). Canadian maps include (1:50,000): 115 A/3, 114 P/14, 114 P/11, 114 P/6, 114 P/5.

Cloudburst Productions of Haines, AK publishes a guide to the Tatshenshini and lower Alsek Rivers. Copies of this publication, and a non-technical map which compliments it, are available for purchase through a book store in the Yakutat Ranger Station operated by the Alaska Natural History Association at (907) 784-3295.

AUTHORIZED AIR TAXI SERVICES SERVING DRY BAY

Fjord Flying
P.O. Box 48
Gustavus, AK 99826
(907) 697-2377
www.fjordflying.com

Tintina Air
100 Condor Rd.
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 6E6
(867) 332-8468
www.tintinaair.com

Ward Air
8991 Yandukin Dr.
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 789-9150
www.wardair.com

Alkan Air, Ltd.
P.O. Box 4008
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 3S9
(867) 668-2107
www.alkanair.co

Mountain Flying Service
P.O. Box 1404
Haines, AK 99827
(907) 766-3007 (summer)
(801) 259-8050 (winter)
www.flyglacierbay.com

Wings of Alaska
1873 Shell Simmons Dr.
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 789-0790
www.wingsofalaska.com

Air North
Whitehorse, YT
(867) 668-2228
www.flyairnorth.com

Sifton Air
Haines Jct., YT
(867) 634-2914

Yakutat Coastal Airways
P.O. Box 326
Yakutat, AK 99689
(907) 784-3831
www.flyyca.com

Earth Center Adventures Inc./
Fly Drake
PO Box 411
Haines, AK 99827
(907) 314-0675
www.flydrake.com

BOAT, EQUIPMENT, TOILET RENTALS, SHUTTLE SERVICES

Alaska River Outfitters
Box 444
Haines, AK 99827
(907) 766-3307 (Apr-Aug)
(801) 733-4669 (Sep-May)

Deishu Expeditions
P.O. Box 1406
Haines, AK 99827
(907) 766-2427

Brabazon Expeditions PO
Box 512
Yakutat, AK 99689 (907)
784-8221
www.brabazonexp.com

Shadow Lake Outfitters
Box 10546 Whitehorse,
YTY1A 7A1 P (867)
393-2232 F (867) 393-2236

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